

Psalm 112

“Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord”

Psalm 112: This psalm is another acrostic and is written in the same 10-verse format as the preceding one. The contrast between the righteous man and the wicked man marks this poem out as a wisdom psalm. Almost all of the psalm, however, is taken up with the good fortunes of the righteous man (verses 1-9), with only one verse dedicated to the observation of the wicked’s destruction (verse 10).

Verses 1-10 (see note on Psalm 111:1-10).

- I. The Blessing of Obedience (112:1-9)
- II. The Emptiness of Sin (112:10)

Verses 1-10: The blessedness of the righteous. We have to praise the Lord that there are a people in the world, who fear him and serve him, and that they are a happy people; which is owing entirely to his grace. Their fear is not that which love casts out, but that which love brings in. It follows and flows from love. It is a fear to offend. This is both fear and trust. The heart touched by the Spirit of God, as the needle touched with the loadstone, turns direct and speedily to God, yet still with trembling, being filled with this holy fear. Blessings are laid up for the faithful and their children's children; and true riches are bestowed on them, with as much of this world's possessions as is profitable for them. In the darkest hours of affliction and trial, the light of hope and peace will spring up within them, and seasonable relief shall turn mourning into joy. From their Lord's example, they learn to be kind and full of compassion, as well as just in all their dealings. They use discretion, that they may be liberal in that manner which appears most likely to do good. Envy and slander may for a time hide their true characters here, but they shall be had in everlasting remembrance. They need not fear evil tidings. A good man shall have a settled spirit. And it is the endeavor of true believers to keep their minds stayed upon God, and so to keep them calm and undisturbed; and God has promised them both cause to do so, and grace to do so. Trusting in the Lord is the best and surest way of establishing the heart. The heart of man cannot fix anywhere with satisfaction, but in the truth of God, and there it finds firm footing. And those whose hearts are established by faith, will patiently wait till they gain their point. Compare all this with the vexation of sinners. The happiness of the saints is the envy of the wicked. The desire of the wicked shall perish; their desire was wholly to the world and the flesh, therefore when these perish, their joy is gone. But the blessings of the gospel are spiritual and eternal, and are conferred upon the members of the Christian church, through Christ their Head, who is the Pattern of all righteousness, and the Giver of all grace.

Psalm 112:1 "Praise ye the LORD. Blessed [is] the man [that] feareth the LORD, [that] delighteth greatly in his commandments."

Margin, as in Hebrew, "Hallelujah" (see the notes at Psalm 106:1).

"Blessed is the man": Hebrew, "The blessings of the man" (see notes at Psalm 1:1). That is, Blessed, or happy, is such a one.

"That feareth the Lord": In (Psalm 111:10), the psalmist had referred to "the fear of the Lord" as "the beginning of wisdom," and had "alluded" to the success, prosperity, or happiness which attends the fear of the Lord, or true religion. This psalm is designed more fully "to illustrate" that thought. That feareth the LORD (see note on Prov. 1:7).

"That delighteth greatly in his commandments" (see notes at Psalm 1:2). It is a characteristic of true piety to find pleasure in the commands of God; in the commandments themselves, and in obedience to them.

The last Psalm was telling of the greatness of the Lord and that we should praise Him. This Psalm is telling of the blessings of the people who bless the Lord. Not only does this man that is blessed, fear the Lord and keep His commandments, but delights in doing the same. The blessed of the Lord is aware that the commandments of the Lord are not grievous. We have spoken in many of these lessons, how the commandments that God has given to man are for the benefit of man, as well as God. If a man will keep the commandments of God, his life will be blessed.

Verses 2-9: The desire of every human for prosperity can only come through obedience to the commands of God (compare Psalm. 1:1-3).

The "horn" is a symbol of strength, power, and dignity. It denotes peace, prosperity and God granted success.

Psalm 112:2 "His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed."

His children; his posterity. That is, they shall be prospered; honored and distinguished among people. Distinguished for their virtues, for their influence, for their success in life. This refers to what was regarded among the Hebrews as an object of great desire, and is in accordance with the promises everywhere found in their Scriptures (see notes Psalms 25:13; 37:25-26; compare Gen. 12:2; 17:6; Exodus 20:6). It is in accordance, also, with a general fact in the course of events. The best security for the virtue and success of children is the virtue and the piety of parents. The surest inheritance as pertaining to happiness, respectability, and usefulness in life, is that which is derived from the example, the prayers, the counsel of a pious father and mother.

"The generation of the upright shall be blessed": The family and the children. Such promises are to be expected to be fulfilled in general. It is not required by any proper rules of interpreting language that this should be universally and always true.

The seed spoken of here, I believe to be the seed of Abraham.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The blessings of Abraham are upon the seed spoken of here. They are mighty upon the earth. They will reign with Jesus upon the earth.

Psalm 112:3 "Wealth and riches [shall be] in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever."

In his family; if not possessed by him, yet by his posterity. Though rather this signifies spiritual riches, the riches of grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ, durable riches and righteousness. Seeing it is connected with an everlasting righteousness, as in the next clause.

"And his righteousness endureth for ever": He is not hurt by his temporal riches, as others are, the prodigal, the covetous, and formal professor. He continues the good and righteous man he was, notwithstanding his riches. Some understand this of his liberality with his riches, as alms deeds are sometimes called righteousness (see Psalm 112:9). Though it rather intends either inherent righteousness, the new man which is created in righteousness, the inward principle of grace which always continues. Or the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, which is an everlasting one.

David and Solomon did have great material wealth upon the earth, but I believe this is speaking of spiritual blessings. Of course all in the earth belongs to God. The whole world and everything in it, is the property of God. He is the Creator and everything is His creation.

Psalm 112:4 "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: [he is] gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous."

Upright ones are sometimes in the darkness of affliction, under divine desertions, without spiritual joy, and in an uncomfortable condition. When on a sudden light arises to them, like break of day, or the morning light: they have deliverance from affliction, and enjoy prosperity. The light of God's countenance is lifted up on them; the sun of righteousness arises upon them with healing in his wings. And spiritual joy and comfort are communicated unto them. It may denote the comforts the people of God have amidst their afflictions and troubles, even while they are in them. And the light they enjoy, while darkness is round about others, like the children of Israel in Egypt. Or the suddenness of deliverance from adversity, temporal or spiritual. Weeping endures for a night, joy comes in the morning, and at evening time it is light (Psalm 30:5).

He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous": That is, the Lord is so. Thus the Arabic version, "the Lord God is merciful and bountiful;" and the Ethiopic version, "merciful and compassionate is the Lord, and righteous is our King." And because God is the God of all grace, and is able to make it abound to his people, and is compassionate to them in distress, and is just and faithful to his promises. Therefore, he causes light to arise to them in darkness; and which, on such account, they may believe and expect (see Micah 7:8). Some understand this of the upright man and of his character; that he is "gracious", kind, and bountiful. That he is "full of compassion", tenderhearted, and shows mercy to distressed objects. And is righteous, through

Christ, and lives soberly and righteously. This sense agrees both with what goes before, and follows after.

This world is full of darkness. We live in that darkness, until we receive the Lord Jesus as our Savior and Lord. When you receive Jesus (who is the Light), into your life, you receive His Light and it does away with darkness. Jesus is full of grace, compassion, and righteousness. If we have Christ in us, we are full of grace and compassion, and righteousness too. It is His grace, and His compassion, and His righteousness we are full of.

Psalm 112:5 "A good man showeth favor, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion."

Without usury, hoping for nothing again. He pities those that labor under difficulties, for want of a little money; and he generously lends it till they are able to pay him again. Which oftentimes is of as much service as if it was given (see Psalm 37:21). A good man is not only a man that has the good work of grace in him, and is ready to every good work; but one that is munificent, bountiful, and liberal. In which sense the word is used in (Rom. 5:7), and so in Latin writers.

"He will guide his affairs with discretion": His civil and domestic affairs. He will act the part of a good economist; so that he may be able to support his family with credit and reputation. And have something to give to the relief of those in want. Some restrain this to his acts of charity. He lends to some, and gives to others. He takes care that they to whom he gives are proper objects of charity. He gives to persons seasonably, and in proportion to his own ability and their wants. It may be rendered, "he shall guide his words with judgment". Take care of what he says, and before whom. And that it be at a proper time and place; and especially when speaking of spiritual and religious things.

If we are a Christian in the true sense, then we are a believer in, and a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. A Christian should be as much like his Leader (Jesus), as possible. We should do the same things He would do. There are several meanings to the word discretion here. One of the meanings is divine law. Another meaning is judgement. He is just to all men, is possibly what this is saying.

Psalm 112:6 "Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

Out of the heart of God, and from his love and affections. Out of the covenant of grace, and from an interest in it. Out of the hands of Christ, or off of him the foundation. Out of the house and family of God. Out of a state of grace and righteousness, into condemnation. And though he may be distressed by afflictions, yet not destroyed. And though he may be so shaken, as to fall from some degree of steadfastness in the faith, and into sin, yet not so as to perish everlastingly. The saint's perseverance is a sure and certain truth, and to be depended upon.

"The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance": With good men, and especially such whose names are recorded in Scripture. And even others are remembered after death; and for a long time after, their pious characters, sayings, actions, sufferings, works, and writings. And with

God, who remembers his love to them, his covenant with them and his promises to them. Has a book of remembrance for their thoughts, words, and actions. Which will be remembered and spoken of at the last day, when forgotten by them (see Prov. 10:9, etc.).

The righteous are those who have received righteousness through Jesus Christ our Lord. They do inherit eternal life in Him. Man will live forever somewhere. We choose our place to spend eternity. If we receive Jesus as our Savior, we inherit eternal life in heaven with Jesus.

Psalm 112:7 "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD."

Of bad news; of reverses and losses. Of the destruction of his ship at sea, or his property by land; of disaster by flood, by famine, or by war. His heart will so fully confide in God that he can commit all calmly into his hands. He will feel assured that all will be well; that nothing occurs but that which the wisest and the best Being in the universe sees it best should occur; and that in all which "does" take place he is able to sustain the sufferer. There is nothing so well suited to make the mind calm as trust in God. What has a man to be afraid of who does trust in him? (Compare Psalms 27:3; 46:2; 56:3-4; Heb. 13:6; Prov. 1:33).

"His heart is fixed": Is firm; is established (see notes at Psalm 57:7).

"Trusting in the Lord": This is the reason "why" his heart is "fixed" or firm. It is not any native courage or resolution. It is not any firmness of his own; it is simply because he has confidence in God, and feels assured that all things will be well.

One of the best examples of this is Job. He lost his family, his wealth, his health even, and he did not once doubt that God would deliver him. He was stayed in his heart on God, and all that hell could send against him did not once cause him to doubt. Christians should not be moved by the circumstances around them. We should know beyond a shadow of a doubt that all is well with our soul.

Psalm 112:8 "His heart [is] established, he shall not be afraid, until he see [his desire] upon his enemies."

Sustained; upheld. This is the same idea, though somewhat varied in form. The word means to sustain; or to support. And the idea is, that there is some basis of support, some strength, which is not his own.

"He shall not be afraid": When he is assailed by enemies.

"Until he see his desire upon his enemies": This implies that he had nothing really to fear. He would certainly overcome his foes. And in the meantime, he might look calmly on all their efforts to destroy him, for those efforts would be vain. So the believer now looks calmly on all his spiritual foes. He has nothing to fear, for he will overcome them all. He will certainly triumph; he will trample them all under his feet. He may well, therefore, endure these conflicts for a brief period, for the issue is certain, and the conflict will soon come to an end.

The sad thing is that there is a day coming when the enemy of the Christian and the enemy of God will feel the wrath of Almighty God. God is longsuffering, but there will come a time when He will say, it is enough. If we are established in the Lord, the small tribulations of this earth should not stagger our faith.

Psalm 112:9 "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honor."

"His horn": Horns on an animal were an indication of strength and prosperity. This is applied figuratively to the righteous. His money, as the Targum. Scattered it here and there, as the sower scatters his seed. Does not throw it all in one place, but some here and some there, and all with profusion and plenty. This denotes the bounty and liberality of the upright. And his wisdom and discretion in distributing his charity, and the numerous objects of it (see Prov. 11:14).

"He hath given to the poor": That stand in need of his charity, freely, cheerfully, and bountifully.

"His righteousness endureth for ever": His liberality continues; he is not wearied of well doing. He gives a portion to seven and to eight, and to as many and as often as there is a call and need for it (see Psalm 112:3).

"His horn shall be exalted with honor": The reproach cast upon him shall be wiped off. He shall grow more prosperous, and become more honorable among men here on earth. And in the resurrection morning shall have the dominion over the wicked, and shall appear with Christ in glory, and be with him to all eternity.

The followers of the Lord will be quick to distribute the blessings the Lord has showered upon them. The difference in the world and the believer is that the believer cares for the poor. We know the Lord Jesus said, "inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these, ye have done it unto me". We cannot directly do great things for the Lord, but when we help the needy and the widows, we are doing it as unto the Lord. Remember, the horn means power, or strength. God will honor those who are the followers of the Lord.

Psalm 112:10 "The wicked shall see [it], and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish."

In utter contrast to the righteous man of verses 2-9, the wicked man lives a worthless existence without strength (compare Psalm 1:4-6).

Notice that it is not the believer that gnashes his teeth. It is the evil one. The wicked will see the blessings that God showers on the believers, and then he will be sorry he did not believe, but it will be too late. The wrath of God will fall on the wicked, and they will beg for the rocks to fall upon them. They will seek death, but it will not come. God gives them ample time to repent, and they do not. Each terrible happening that comes upon them is followed by another, and they repented not.

To summarize this lesson, we see that the blessings of God are reserved for the believers. The believers have the same heart as their Lord and Savior. They try to do the things that are the will of God for their lives. They face tribulation and never falter. At the end, they will reign with Jesus over the evil. The evil will awake to their mistake in not receiving the Lord, but it will be too late!

Psalm 112 Questions

1. Blessed is the man that _____ the LORD.
2. What is this Psalm telling of?
3. How do the blessed of the Lord feel about the commandments?
4. Who do the commandments of God benefit?
5. Who are the seed in verse 2?
6. _____ and _____ shall be in his house.
7. Who were two Old Testament Kings who were wealthy?
8. What kind of blessings does the author believe verse 3 is speaking of?
9. Who receives Light in this darkened world?
10. Who is the Light?
11. Where do we get the compassion that we have?
12. Verse 5 says, a good man showeth _____ and _____.
13. A Christian, in the true sense, is what?
14. What does discretion in verse 5 mean?
15. Who are the righteous?
16. Why shall the believer not be afraid of evil tidings?
17. Who is a very good example of this?
18. Should a Christian be moved by circumstances?
19. What is the sad thing about that coming day of wrath?
20. What does verse 9 say a believer does?

21. What does the horn symbolize?
22. How can you do great things for Jesus?
23. Who shall gnash his teeth?
24. The wicked shall seek death, but _____.
25. Each terrible happening that comes upon the evil is followed by another _____.
26. The blessings of God are reserved for the _____.
27. Describe the believer.